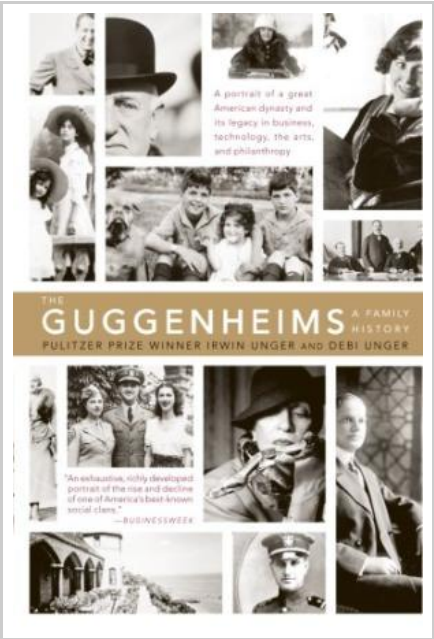


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The Guggenheims: A Family History

By Debi Unger

Harper Perennial. Paperback. Book Condition: New. Paperback. 576 pages. Dimensions: 7.8in. x 4.9in. x 1.1in.A portrait of a great American dynasty and its legacy in business, technology, the arts, and philanthropyMeyer Guggenheim, a Swiss immigrant, founded a great American business dynasty. At their peak in the early twentieth century, the Guggenheims were reckoned among Americas wealthiest, and the richest Jewish family in the world after the Rothschilds. They belonged to Our Crowd, that tight social circle of New York Jewish plutocrats, but unlike the others -- primarily merchants and financiers -- they made their money by extracting and refining copper, silver, lead, tin, and gold. The secret of their success, the patriarch believed, was their unity, and in the early years Meyers seven sons, under the leadership of Daniel, worked as one to expand their growing mining and smelting empire. Family solidarity eventually decayed (along with their Jewish faith), but even more damaging was the paucity of male heirs as Meyer and the original set of brothers passed from the scene. In the third generation, Harry Guggenheim, Daniels son, took over leadership and made the family a force in aviation, publishing, and horse-racing. He desperately sought a successor but tragically...

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